

## **Historic, Archive Document**

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

## PREFACE

This report, covering April 1954, is the first in a new series of monthly reports showing estimates of current household purchases of butter, cheese, nonfat dry milk solids, and margarine. This series, and other reports described below, will be based on information obtained in a cooperative project financed by the dairy industry and the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The Department funds are provided under the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946. (RMA, Title II)

The basic data presented herein were collected and tabulated from the National Consumer Panel of the Market Research Corporation of America, Chicago, Ill., under contract with the Department. These data represent expansions to national totals from a representative nationwide sample of approximately 5,800 household consumers. The basic reporting unit in this sample is the weekly diary kept by each consumer on the panel reporting, in detail, volumes purchased and related information on food and drug products. The monthly estimates represent purchases during a 4-week period, 28 days, for purposes of month-to-month comparison.

The estimates include only purchases for consumption by household consumers and in no way reflect volume purchased for or through outlets such as hotels, restaurants, hospitals, or other institutions.

Under terms of this contract, this series of monthly reports will be complemented by quarterly reports showing data on the same items of food for the United States and by regions and by type of retail sales outlet. The quarterly reports will contain information covering a 13-week period, whereas the three individual monthly reports for each quarter cover only a 12-week period.

A report will also be released covering a 6-month period and relating household purchases of the specified dairy products and margarine to family characteristics. The data breakdowns for the report based on family characteristics will be by region, size of community, income, occupation, age of housewife, and size of household.

This report was prepared in the Market Development Branch, Marketing Research Division, Agricultural Marketing Service.

HOUSEHOLD PURCHASES OF BUTTER, CHEESE, NONFAT DRY  
MILK SOLIDS, AND MARGARINE, APRIL 1954

The data in this report are estimates of total purchases by household consumers only, and do not include consumption in restaurants, hotels, hospitals, or other institutional outlets. Data for a single month are for 4-week periods (28 days) in order to permit comparisons of purchase volume between periods of equal length.

SUMMARY

Household purchases of butter were estimated at 58 million pounds in April 1954, about 7 percent greater than for the average 28-day period in the months November 1953-January 1954. Householders paid an average price of 66.6 cents per pound for butter in April after the general decline in retail dairy prices that followed the lowering of Government price supports on dairy products April 1. This was 9.4 cents per pound below the November 1953-January 1954 average.

Total cheese purchases by household consumers, actual weight basis, including natural and processed cheese and cheese foods and cheese spreads, were estimated at 50.3 million pounds in April. Also reported were purchases of slightly more than 37 million pounds of cottage cheese at an average price per 12-ounce unit of 21.2 cents.

Purchases of nonfat dry milk solids for household use totaled 11.1 million pounds in April. The average price paid for this product was reported at 38.1 cents per pound.

Household purchases of margarine, carried in this report for purposes of comparison with butter, were estimated at a little over 86 million pounds in April, down about 3 percent from the average 28-day period in November 1953-January 1954. Prices reported paid for this product in April were 26.6 cents per pound, about the same as in the November 1953-January 1954 period.

As this series develops over time for the various items, comparisons will be made of rates of change in purchases and prices and of other factors. Trends will be noted relative to seasonal patterns of consumption, and it is also hoped to establish data showing what proportion of the total domestic disappearance of these items goes into household channels.



## BUTTER

Purchases of butter by household consumers in April 1954 were estimated at 58.0 million pounds, about 7 percent more than in the average 28-day period for the months November 1953-January 1954. This does not include purchases in hotels, restaurants, hospitals, or other institutional outlets. Data are not available as to normal seasonal changes in household purchases. The November-January period is the latest for which data were available when purchases could not be influenced by news reports of expected lowering of prices.

Examination of estimates of purchase volume from the panel of the Market Research Corporation of America indicates that on a weekly basis purchases began to increase before the price of butter went down the first of April. Purchases during the first 2 weeks of April were more than 10 percent above the average for the months of November 1953-January 1954. During the latter part of April, however, butter purchases fell off somewhat. Preliminary tabulations for the first two weeks in May indicate that purchases picked up again and were almost 10 percent higher than the average during the November-January period.

The increase in consumption of butter in households in this country followed a decrease in retail prices of butter due to the reduction in price supports on butter and other dairy products, effective April 1, 1954. Average prices paid by consumers were reported at 66.6 cents per pound in April, 9.4 cents per pound, or 12 percent, less than the 76.0 cents per pound average price paid by consumers in November 1953-January 1954.

Additional data in this report indicate that 44 percent of all families reporting in this national sample of household consumers bought butter in April. Of those families buying, the average size of purchase was slightly over a pound and each buying family averaged close to three purchases during the month.

Household consumption of butter was estimated at almost 60 percent of total civilian disappearance in April. This figure represents a slight increase in proportion consumed in households compared with the November 1953-January 1954 period. Disappearance figures are based on preliminary estimates to be published in the "Dairy Situation," by the Department. These estimates were adjusted to a 28-day basis so as to be comparable with the consumer panel data.

## CHEESE

Householders bought an estimated total of 50.3 million pounds of cheese, purchased-weight basis, in April 1954. This figure includes an estimate of purchases of natural and processed cheese. Cottage cheese is excluded from this total.

Natural cheese purchases were estimated at 24.8 million pounds during April 1954. Of this amount, American cheese purchases of 14.9 million pounds were

about 60 percent of the natural cheese total. Household consumers bought about equal amounts of Swiss, cream, and other varieties to make up the remainder of the natural cheese (see table 2).

Purchases by householders in April of processed cheese, including cheese foods and cheese spreads, were estimated at 25.5 million pounds.

The average price paid per pound in April for natural American cheese was 63.6 cents. Processed cheese, excluding cheese foods and spreads, was purchased at an average price of 60.9 cents per pound.

Average size of purchase for all types of cheese ranged from 5.7 ounces for cream cheese to 21.7 ounces for processed cheese foods.

Almost 60 percent of all families reported buying some type of natural or processed cheese in April. The estimated percentage of all families buying each type will be shown in the forthcoming quarterly reports both for the United States and by five regions.

Cottage cheese purchases in April by household consumers totaled 37.4 million pounds. Householders bought almost a pound of cottage cheese per purchase and paid an average of 21.2 cents per 12-ounce unit. Prices paid per actual 12-ounce unit by consumers were slightly higher at 22.7 cents. These prices paid by consumers for cottage cheese have been carefully checked to eliminate any upward bias in reporting due to various tie-in sales commonly used to increase sales of this item.

#### NONFAT DRY MILK SOLIDS

Householders purchased an estimated total of 11.1 million pounds of nonfat dry milk solids in April. Unlike the other products mentioned in this report, only about 15 percent of nonfat dry milk solids is packaged for home use; bakers and food processors account for most of the domestic non-governmental disappearance of nonfat dry milk solids for human consumption. However, in the last few years increasing amounts of nonfat milk solids have been purchased by consumers for household use.

Prices paid for nonfat dry milk solids averaged 38.1 cents per pound in April, based on all household purchases. For 1-pound packages only, the average price was 36.7 cents.

The average size of purchase by families buying nonfat dry milk solids was reported at 21.1 ounces in April. The purchase rate by household consumers was estimated at 70.2 pounds per 1,000 population for the 28-day period.

Since the time between purchases of nonfat dry milk solids for most householders is usually longer than a month, information as to percentage of families buying will be presented quarterly.



## MARGARINE

Household purchases of margarine, carried in this report for purposes of comparison with butter, totaled an estimated 86.3 million pounds in April 1954. This quantity was about 3 percent less than the estimated 89.1 million pounds purchased by consumers in the average 28-day period during November 1953-January 1954.

Average prices paid by consumers for margarine in April were reported at 26.2 cents per pound, only slightly changed from the average price of 26.5 cents per pound during the months of November 1953-January 1954.

Although families buying margarine averaged fewer purchases in April than did families buying butter, they bought almost 1.5 pounds per purchase as against a 1.1 pound average for families buying butter.

About 56 percent of all families purchased margarine in April as against 44 percent of all families buying butter. Families buying both butter and margarine are included in each category. In addition, some families may not have bought either during the 28-day period. This information as to duplication or omission was not available for the report but will be available in later reports. The rate of margarine consumption based on household purchases was estimated at 546 pounds per 1,000 population for the 28-day period.

Household purchases of margarine in April amounted to 76 percent of estimated total disappearance. Disappearance figures are based on preliminary estimates to be published in the "Fats and Oils Situation," by the Department. These estimates were adjusted to a 28-day basis so as to be comparable with the consumer panel data.

Table 1.--Butter: Household purchases and average price per pound,  
U. S., 4-week periods, April 1954

| Year<br>and<br>month | Percentage of<br>all families<br>buying | Purchases         |                     |                   |                         | Average price<br>paid per<br>pound |
|----------------------|---|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
|                      |   | Per buying family | Average<br>quantity | Total             | Per 1,000<br>population |                                    |
|                      |   | Number            | Pounds              | Million<br>pounds | Pounds                  | Cents                              |
| 1954<br>April        | 44.0                                    | 2.74              | 1.09                | 58.03             | 367                     | 66.6                               |

Source: National Consumer Panel of Market Research Corporation of America.

Table 2.--Cheese: Household purchases and average price per unit,  
U. S., 4-week period, April 1954

| Type           | Percentage of<br>all families<br>buying any type | Quantity purchased         |              |                         | Average price<br>paid per unit |       |
|----------------|--|----------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|-------|
|                |  | Average<br>per<br>purchase | Total        | Per 1,000<br>population | Unit                           | Price |
|                |  | Ounces                     | 1,000 pounds | Pounds                  |                                | Cents |
| Natural        |  |                            |              |                         |                                |       |
| American       | x  | 13.2                       | 14,909       | 94.4                    | Lb.                            | 63.6  |
| Swiss          | x  | 10.0                       | 3,177        | 20.1                    | Lb.                            | 78.0  |
| Cream          | x  | 5.7                        | 3,394        | 21.5                    | 3 oz.                          | 14.1  |
| Other          | x  | 10.3                       | 3,321        | 21.0                    | Lb.                            | 75.5  |
| Processed      |  |                            |              |                         |                                |       |
| Cheese         | x  | 11.2                       | 10,742       | 68.0                    | Lb.                            | 60.9  |
| Cheese food    | x  | 21.7                       | 9,110        | 57.7                    | Lb.                            | 47.1  |
| Cheese spread  | x  | 12.0                       | 5,672        | 35.9                    | Lb.                            | 57.9  |
|                | 1/59.7   |                            |              |                         |                                |       |
| Cottage cheese | ---  | 15.8                       | 37,374       | 236.6                   | 12 oz.                         | 21.2  |

1/Estimated percentage buying each type will be supplied in quarterly report.

Source: National Consumer Panel of Market Research Corporation of America.

Table 3.--Nonfat dry milk solids: Household purchases and average price per pound, U. S., 4-week period, April 1954

| Year and month | Quantity purchased   |              |                      | Average price paid          |                  |
|----------------|----------------------|--------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|
|                | Average per purchase | Total        | Per 1,000 population | Per pound for all purchases | Per actual pound |
|                | Ounces               | 1,000 pounds | Pounds               | Cents                       | Cents            |
| 1954 April     | 21.1                 | 11,085       | 70.2                 | 38.1                        | 36.7             |

Source: National Consumer Panel of Market Research Corporation of America.

Table 4.--Margarine: Household purchases and average price per pound, U. S., 4-week periods, April 1954

| Year and month | Percentage of all families buying | Purchases          |                  |                |                      | Average price paid per pound |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------------|------------------------------|
|                |                                   | Per buying family: | Quantity         |                | Per 1,000 population |                              |
|                |                                   | Average            | Average quantity | Total          |                      |                              |
|                | Percent                           | Number             | Pounds           | Million pounds | Pounds               | Cents                        |
| 1954 April     | 56.4                              | 2.38               | 1.45             | 86.27          | 546                  | 26.2                         |

Source: National Consumer Panel of Market Research Corporation of America.